

City Council Finance Committee Meeting Notes

Tuesday, August 27, 2013

7:00PM

Hurley Building

Present: Finance Committee members: Taylor, Terwilliger, Wade, White
Council members: Mayor Polimeni, Whitcomb
City Staff: City Manager Forrest, Assistant City Manager White, City Clerk/Treasurer Abdallah, Public Works Director Sprague, Police Chief Welch, Fire Chief Marentette, City Attorney Smith

1. Roller Bid

Public Works Director Sprague reviewed the results of the bidding process related to the proposed purchase of a new double steel drum roller. Six bids were received, but only one of the six met the required specifications – a \$112,455 bid from Southworth-Milton Cat, Inc. in Batavia. Mr. Sprague requested approval of this purchase. While the 2013 capital budget targeted \$94K for the purchase, there are adequate funds remaining in the budget to cover this request.

Action Taken: Committee voted 4:0 to recommend to Council, in the form of a resolution, approval of this purchase.

2. Public Works Fees for 2014 Revisited

At the July 2013 Finance Committee meeting, the Public Works fee schedule was reviewed and the rationale behind certain changes recommended by staff was presented. At that time, the Committee reserved a decision on three proposed fee changes, pending additional background data to be presented by staff in August: a) water turn off / turn on fee per visit, b) multi-unit refuse fee for units 2-4, and c) nonprofit refuse fee. Public Works Director Sprague addressed all three as follows:

a) Given the highly-infrequent demand for this service, Mr. Sprague stated that a \$25/visit fee, a decrease from the current \$50/visit fee, would cover the service cost and is recommended for the 2014 budget.

b) and c) Mr. Sprague stated that an updated analysis shows the cost of the City's refuse and recycle pickup service to be \$173/unit in 2013 and an estimated \$177/unit in 2014. He recommended that the fee schedule for units 2-4 in multi-unit residential homes and nonprofit organizations be adjusted to \$177/unit in 2014 vs. the current \$160/unit fee. Discussion centered on the fairness issue – given that nonprofits generally generate higher refuse/recycle volumes compared to many of the residents in small multi-unit homes who are single seniors.

Action Taken: Committee agreed 4:0 to include the recommended \$25/visit water turn off / turn on fee in the draft 2014 budget. Committee, with a 2:2 vote, did not agree on increasing the refuse/recycle fee from current \$160/unit for the draft 2014 budget.

3. Second Quarter Financial Report

Clerk/Treasurer Abdallah reviewed the year-to-date General, Water, and Sewer Funds financial performance through June 2013. The analysis compared 2013 revenues and expenditures with 2011, 2012, and 2013 budget and summarized reasons for modest variances. In general, 2013 revenues and expenditures are on track for all three funds, and no significant year-end surprises are anticipated.

The detailed report is attached to these notes.

Action Taken: None, this was an information-only topic. Committee thanked Ms. Abdallah for a clear, easy-to-interpret report and for her continued outstanding stewardship of the City's finances.

4. Police and Fire Staffing – Estimated Cost Figures for Proposed 2014 Staff Increases

Clerk/Treasurer Abdallah, Police Chief Welch, and Fire Chief Marentette presented detailed analyses of the estimated financial impact of 2014 staffing increases that Chiefs Welch and Marentette proposed at a recent Committee of the Whole meeting.

Police – each additional officer will cost \$105,536 in 2014, increasing to \$120,987 in 2016. Four new officers are requested. Increasing the part-time typist to full-time will generate an incremental additional cost of \$42,052 in 2014, increasing to \$47,978 in 2016. Discussion centered mostly on the officer request/cost and the experience in the past few years of using part-time vs. full-time officers to reduce police costs.

Fire – Retaining three additional career firefighters on staff (for a total of 9 plus the Chief), following the expiration of SAFER grant money last month, will cost \$305,630 in 2014, increasing to \$365,084 in 2016. Establishing a minimum staff-on-duty level of 2 (vs. the current 1) will cost \$77,425 in 2014, increasing to \$80,957 in 2016. Promoting four senior career firefighters to Captain will cost \$25,987 in 2014, increasing to \$27,173 in 2016. Establishing on-call pay for times when the Chief is out of town will cost \$4,633 in 2014, increasing to \$5,482 in 2016.

The analyses supporting the above summaries are attached to these notes.

Action Taken: None, this was an information-only topic. The information will be used by Council when it deliberates 2014 staffing levels and the 2014 General Fund budget this coming November.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00PM. The next Finance Committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, September 24 at 7:00PM at the Hurley Building.

Respectfully submitted,

James Terwilliger
Finance Committee Chair